

WASHINGTON CROP WEATHER

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Hail Storms Damage Fruit Crop Precipitation Aided Winter Wheat and Spring Cereal Conditions

Field Crops

Winter wheat and spring cereal conditions were improved. Benton County reported that a large amount of re-seeded winter wheat was not growing. Grass planting continued in Whatcom County. Grass silage bagging continued in Snohomish and King Counties. Irrigated bluegrass in Adams County has headed out. Christmas tree growers applied systemic fungicides on Grand fir and were placing bird roosting sticks in Noble fir to minimize damage to newly emerged leaders.

Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 14% very poor, 17% poor, 36% fair, and 33% good. Dairies in Grays Harbor County were busy applying liquid manure to fields.

Fruits and Vegetables

Apple, pear and cherry producers in Kittitas County reported up to 80 percent damage to their fruit crop due to hail storms. Hail damage to fruit crops were also reported in Yakima, Douglas, Chelan, Grant, and Klickitat Counties. Whatcom County raspberry producers have continued to discover frost damage. Cool temperatures in Benton County slowed cherries from maturing and will cause the time of harvest to be spread out. Some blueberries and strawberries have been irrigated and Skagit County began harvesting fresh market strawberries. Two-thirds of Grays Harbor County sweet corn has been planted. Asparagus harvest continued. Lettuce harvests started in Fife and Orting.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork	
Week	Days
This Week	4.6
Last Week	5.7

Soil Moisture and Supply				
Soil Type	% Acreage			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	1	30	64	5
Subsoil	9	29	58	4
Irrigation Water	0	8	92	0
Hay and Roughage	1	6	90	3

VS=Very Short, SH=Short, AD=Adequate, S=Surplus

Crop Progress				
Crop/Activity	% Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2003	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Emerged	100	96	95	95
Spring Wheat Headed	4	1	1	2
Winter Wheat Headed	27	10	17	18
Barley Emerged	99	97	95	95
Barley Headed	2	1	1	NA
Potatoes Emerged	83	70	73	72
Corn Planted	93	92	95	90
Corn Emerged	59	40	58	30
Dry Edible Beans Planted	99	99	50	34
Alfalfa Hay 1st Cutting	30	15	43	NA

Crop Condition *					
Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	2	8	31	55	4
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	11	84	5
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	5	49	42	4
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	0	6	87	7
Barley Dryland	0	5	46	44	5
Barley Irrigated	0	0	8	84	8
Potatoes	0	0	3	97	0
Corn	0	0	1	99	0
Dry Edible Beans	0	0	5	94	1

VP=Very Poor, P=Poor, F=Fair, G=Good, EX=Excellent

* Crop conditions are a measure of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

Western

Grays Harbor: Rain showers near the end of the week were welcomed by sweet corn growers with recently planted fields. Nearly two thirds of the sweet corn acreage was planted. Growers continued to be concerned about the drier than normal spring. Christmas tree growers were monitoring Douglas Fir fields for Cooley Spruce Gall adelgids. U-Pick vegetable growers finished planting pumpkins and other warm season vegetable crops. Dairy producers continued applying liquid manure to forage fields. The warmer than average temperatures this spring continued to keep forage producers extremely busy trying to keep fields cut. The radiant golden glow across the rural landscape was finally beginning to wane as Scotch Broom flowers finally began to fade. Commercial greenhouse tomato growers reported continued rapid development of plant growth and prolific bloom.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: Forage production continued to be two to three weeks ahead of schedule. Production was about average. With spring moisture levels averaging at least a third below average, there was considerable concern about the need for precipitation for the summer as soil moisture levels have no reserve.

Pierce/S. King: Row crops were about two weeks ahead of normal schedule. Harvest was starting for lettuce in the Fife and Orting areas. No crop damage due to weather conditions was reported. No unusual situations to report.

Skagit: Dry weather continued, speeding up ripening of the strawberry crop and causing concern for many farmers about new plantings of other crops. Harvest of fresh-market strawberries began, and the processing crop should come off the first week in June. In general, the crops were about three weeks ahead of normal harvest dates. Some growers were irrigating strawberries and blueberries. Blueberry shock virus was expressing symptoms in some fields. Aphid populations were especially high this year. Apple growers were spraying for scab

and worms. Growers were noting damage to raspberry plants, presumably from a January 8 event, when the temperature in Mount Vernon plummeted to eight degrees.

Skagit/San Juan/Island: On Saturday May 22 we received a much needed rain. Most crops have been planted. No crop damage was reported.

Snohomish/N. King: The area experienced normal spring weather. Temperatures were in the normal range. Rain was heavy at times on Saturday, but the season totals are still far below average.

Snohomish/King: A welcome rain fell late in the week. Up to an inch of rain fell in some areas. Grass silage bagging and manure spreading continued. Most crops have been planted. A dry spring has contributed to a good fruit set for most tree fruit. Some strawberries have begun to ripen already. Raspberries were in bloom. Most pastures were growing well.

Thurston: Heavy rain showers over the weekend were welcomed by most agricultural producers who continued to worry about the unseasonably dry conditions. The combination of moisture and warm temperatures has resulted in rapid seed germination in newly seeded turfgrass fields. Christmas tree growers applied systemic fungicides on Grand fir and were placing bird roosting sticks in Noble fir to minimize damage to newly emerged leaders. U-Pick vegetable growers continued battling weeds. Blueberry growers were mowing cover crops between the rows. Forage crop producers worked long hours to keep up harvest requirements on rapidly growing fields.

Whatcom: A couple days of rain showers brought relief to the abnormally dry soil conditions. Corn planting was wrapping up, as grass planting continued. New seedlings were beginning to emerge. More raspberry growers reported frost damage.

Central

Benton: We received some spotty showers throughout the week. With one of those showers we received some hail, that may impact some of the fruit crops. A lot of re-seeded winter wheat was not growing because it did not have a chance to vernalize.

Benton (2nd Report): No significant damage to cherries from recent storms was reported. Cooler temperatures delayed maturity and was spreading out the time of harvest. Asparagus harvest, weed control and irrigation were major activities.

Douglas/Chelan: Spring storms occurred throughout both Chelan and Douglas Counties. A tornado was reported near East Wenatchee in Douglas County. Marble-sized hail stones were experienced from the East Wenatchee airport through to Blewett Pass in Chelan County. Some producers reported damage to fruit crops (apples, cherries, and pears). Various amounts of precipitation were reported throughout the counties. Moisture would greatly improve the dryland wheat crops.

Grant: Thunderstorms with some hail occurred throughout the county with readings in excess of three inches reported over a two day period. Rain significantly reduced quality to cut alfalfa and very little had been baled. Many growers delayed swathing, waiting for a break in the weather pattern. Some hail damage to fruit was reported. Dry bean planting and cultivating operations on some crops had also been delayed. On the plus side, rainfall had been timely to improve the prospects of dryland grain yields for 2004.

Grant (2nd Report): Thunderstorms and rain delayed some field work. Sweet corn planting continued.

Franklin: Mild temperatures were experienced during the week, but rains continued to delay alfalfa cutting operations. Asparagus harvest continued. Sweet corn was being planted.

Kittitas: Reports were received of severe hail damage to orchards. Orchardists were claiming that up to 80 percent damage occurred to apples, pears, and cherries due to the hail storms that occurred May 19, 2004. Range and pasture conditions will improve with the recent precipitation received.

Kittitas (2nd Report): Several rains this week produced needed effective moisture. Many non-timothy hay fields are nearly ready for haying. The week was cool and wet. Upper elevation range was in pretty good shape, with decent production. Lower elevation range land was still pretty dry.

Okanogan/Ferry: The county received some welcome rains. There were reports of as much as two inches of precipitation. Crop and pasture conditions should improve as a result of this.

Yakima: Average temperatures varied from nine degrees above normal to three degrees below normal, with 0.14 of an inch of precipitation. A few producers have reported damage to fruit crops due to hail storms.

Yakima (2nd Report): Scattered, but widespread thundershowers with hail were experienced throughout the Yakima Valley. Crop damage to cherry and apple crops was reported. Extent and magnitude of damage was still being assessed.

Eastern

Asotin/Garfield: Rain off and on throughout the week and weekend was very beneficial to crops. Crops were looking much better as moisture in the topsoil was adequate in most areas. Winter wheat was heading in some areas.

Adams: Location, location, location . . . like real estate, farmers benefitted or were cursed by the past weeks weather pattern based on their zip codes. Clouds with bushels of rain unloaded across parts of the County including Ritzville, and areas north on Thursday, and again Saturday with reports of accumulations greater than an inch, but some areas missed both storms completely, or picked up only marginal amounts. For the lucky, timing could not have been better with winter wheat heading, and spring grains desperate for a shot in the arm. As for the rest? Around the County, irrigated bluegrass was headed out, peas were progressing nicely, and Othello area farms noted field corn taller than normal for this time of year.

Adams (2nd Report): Heavy amounts of precipitation were reported throughout the county but some locations received little. The precipitation moisture conditions improved as did winter and spring cereal conditions. Winter wheat remained in mostly fair/good condition with an increase in the amount in good condition. Spring wheat and barley also remained in fair/good condition with an increase in the amount in good condition.

Lincoln: Moisture levels and winter and spring cereal conditions improved as heavy amounts of precipitation were reported throughout the county, but rain was spotty and not as heavy in some locations. Overall the winter wheat was in mostly fair/good condition with an increase in the percent of good

wheat. Spring wheat and barley conditions were also upgraded to a larger amount in fair and good condition.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: The county received large amounts of rain starting Thursday with a thunderstorm. This system stuck around all weekend. Rainfall totals varied from 1.5 inches to 3.0 plus inches depending on what system your farm was under. Rain, hail and tornados were part of the system. A record was set at the airport with two inches of rain in less than 24 hours. With these systems we received some serious erosion because it was too much too fast. Reports were coming in with some of the damage. Whole fields had plants and seeds washed away in the Plaza area. Roads washed out in a number of areas. Gully erosion was the main problem reported. An assessment of the damage will be completed shortly.

Stevens: Rain showers and thunderstorms the past week replenished surface moisture. Pastures, hay, and grain all benefitted from the much needed precipitation.

Walla Walla: Numerous thunder showers over past few days, substantial rainfall, and winds. All crops looked improved. Quite a bit of alfalfa cut was rained on several times. Green pea harvest should begin within the next few days.

Whitman: Low pressure brought rain and cooler temperatures to the Palouse. Strong storms later in the week and over the weekend brought totals of an inch or two to areas causing some flooding and erosion in areas. Overall the rain was welcomed and provided a tremendous boost to spring and winter crops.



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Weekly Weather Statistics

May 24, 2004

Station	Air Temperature				Growing Degree Days				Last Week Precipitation			Season Precipitation			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	Base 50F		Base 60F		Total			Total		% Normal	Days
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	Inches	DFN	Days	Inches	DFN		
WEST															
Bellingham	45	71	56	2	45	15	0	0	0.20	-0.29	3	24.78	-6.39	79	125
Everett	49	73	58	3	57	22	3	3	0.35	-0.21	3	24.49	-6.80	78	129
Hoquiam	43	66	55	1	37	7	0	0	0.44	-0.24	4	57.33	-5.08	92	156
Kelso	45	75	59	4	63	25	2	2	0.23	-0.32	2	28.98	-12.45	70	109
Olympia	47	73	58	4	55	26	2	2	0.29	-0.13	2	41.85	-4.58	90	141
Sea-Tac	49	73	59	3	61	19	3	3	0.05	-0.30	1	30.07	-3.36	90	118
Shelton	42	73	58	2	54	9	0	-3	0.27	-0.22	2	58.70	-1.77	97	143
Tacoma	45	76	58	2	57	14	2	2	0.28	-0.14	2	28.08	-6.81	81	124
Vancouver	46	75	59	4	65	25	2	1	0.30	-0.20	3	28.11	-9.02	76	133
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	44	79	61	5	77	33	16	12	0.33	0.19	3	6.80	-0.81	89	80
Omak	42	75	59	4	65	26	2	-1	1.69	1.33	4	9.46	-2.17	81	63
Stampede Pass	37	58	45	3	1	1	0	0	0.82	0.05	4	63.05	-10.93	85	143
Wenatchee	46	77	60	0	73	3	17	3	0.42	0.30	6	8.17	1.24	118	71
Yakima AP	44	78	61	4	78	21	14	6	0.08	-0.06	1	5.63	-1.10	84	61
NORTHEAST															
Colville	44	75	57	2	49	11	3	0	1.17	0.68	4	7.70	-9.61	44	62
Deer Park	38	69	55	-1	33	-5	0	-2	1.59	1.24	7	15.82	0.48	103	109
Republic	37	76	55	3	35	13	0	0	0.74	0.39	5	9.76	-1.95	83	72
Spokane AP	43	68	55	0	38	1	0	-2	2.37	2.02	6	11.99	-1.50	89	97
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	43	76	60	-2	75	-5	11	-7	0.37	0.23	4	4.26	-1.77	71	59
Moses Lake	46	77	61	-1	78	-2	13	-5	0.32	0.18	4	4.46	-1.57	74	58
Quincy	48	78	62	2	83	16	18	5	0.60	0.46	5	4.83	-1.75	73	55
Ritzville	46	73	57	3	50	11	1	-2	1.73	1.52	4	9.90	0.26	103	67
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	48	80	63	-2	95	-6	30	-2	0.26	0.16	3	5.55	-0.08	99	59
Pasco	48	80	64	2	100	13	30	6	0.59	0.45	5	6.38	-0.05	99	70
Pullman	43	66	55	2	35	8	0	0	0.57	0.22	4	14.33	-3.33	81	97
Walla Walla Rgn	45	72	59	-2	64	-9	6	-9	1.04	0.69	4	17.18	0.42	103	98
Whitman Miss.	41	75	60	+2	72	12	12	2	0.85	0.58	5	14.82	3.18	127	101
ID PANHANDLE															
Coeur D'A' AP	41	73	55	-2	41	-5	4	0	2.04	1.55	7	11.42	-9.85	54	88
Lewiston ID	46	73	59	-1	67	1	10	-2	1.36	1.08	5	9.36	-0.02	100	79

Summary based on NWS data.

Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Wednesday September 1, 2003

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).

NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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